



OUR PLACE

Ko Konei

Your Whakatāne District Council
Community update - October 2014

PROFILE: Councillor Alison Silcock

Originally from Wellington, Alison Silcock grew up beside the sea in Auckland, which perhaps explains her lifelong love of swimming. After becoming a teacher, she lived and worked in various locations around the country before applying for a position in Murupara and meeting her then-dairy farmer husband Dave. She has called the Murupara/Galatea area home for 40 years now and says she has finally adjusted to river swimming, as opposed to the sea.

Mrs Silcock says she was very much "co-opted" into local government, after several years of active support for the Murupara Aquatic Centre. She first served on the local Community Board before being elected as Councillor for the Galatea-Murupara Ward in 2013, and is passionate about serving her community.

"I would like to see more acknowledgement of our rural communities," she says. "Agriculture, horticulture and forestry really form the backbone of regions like the Bay of Plenty, and yet it seems our focus continues to be on urban areas.

"I would also like to get things done within the community, particularly with regard to boosting community pride and making our streets safer. For example, there are currently many issues with alleyways in Murupara, and working through Council and with the Community Board will ensure that this is something people will not have to worry about in the future."



Tidy Kiwis

L-R: Mayor Tony Bonne, Deputy Mayor Judy Turner, Sandy Pryde of Pride Whakatāne, and Councillor Andrew Iles collecting rubbish around the CBD.

This year's Keep New Zealand Beautiful Week took place from 14 to 20 September, with several local groups pitching in to help keep our district rubbish-free. Members of Pride Whakatāne collected rubbish around the CBD and Councillor Andrew Iles, who chairs the group, says that this year there was noticeably less refuse.

Among the groups joining in the programme were the Whakatāne Baptist Church, with some 40 members collecting more than 150kg of rubbish from the Awatapu Lagoon area. Councillor Iles says several groups have adopted areas which they monitor and tidy on a regular basis, and this ongoing involvement is greatly appreciated by Pride Whakatāne.

Also at work recently were staff members of the Whakatāne branch of the Bank of New Zealand, who joined their colleagues throughout the country for "Closed for Good" on 4 September. This corporate volunteering initiative sees the bank close its doors for a day as staff carry out volunteer work in their communities. The Whakatāne staff joined members of the Whakatāne District Council Parks and Reserves team in planting ground cover around the CBD and clearing and thinning vegetation in Awatapu.

Don't drive tired

If you drive tired, you're risking your life and that of other road users. Fatigued drivers have slower reactions, don't concentrate well and risk falling asleep at the wheel. Rest well before you hit the road, get plenty of fresh air and stop regularly.

Police and Eastern Bay Road Safety representatives are helping drivers do just that, with the annual Labour Weekend fatigue stop on again in the Waioeka Gorge. Organised by local Police, with support from Eastern Bay Road Safety staff, the Monday, 27 October fatigue stop aims to highlight the dangers of driving while tired and encourage drivers to take a break. Vehicles travelling on SH2 between 10am-2pm will be stopped at the Maunganuku rest area and the drivers offered the chance to take a break. Food and drink will be provided.

"This fatigue stop is a chance for Police and Eastern Bay Road Safety representatives to directly engage with motorists and prevent fatigue-related crashes," Whakatāne District Council senior community development advisor Erena Brew says. "It aims to help people to recognise and manage the signs of driver fatigue."



Appointment of Community Representatives

Whakatāne's Creative Communities Allocation Committee requires three community representatives who are familiar with a broad range of local arts activities to serve on the committee for the next three years. Applications for funding are sought in May and November each year, and the allocation committee meets to distribute the funds in early June and early December.

APPLICATIONS CAN BE MADE IN WRITING TO: the Chief Executive, Whakatāne District Council, Private Bag 1002, Whakatāne 3158 by 5pm on Wednesday, 8 October 2014. Enquiries can be made to Janie Storey (Ph. 306 0530, or email Janie.Storey@whakatane.govt.nz).

Geotech survey underway

Work has begun on a geotechnical survey of the Whakatāne CBD. The Whakatāne District Council has appointed Ian Brown Associates Ltd of Lower Hutt to undertake the survey, and work began on 22 September. The survey will provide building owners with a better understanding of the area's underlying geology and enable more informed decision-making about the seismic strengthening required to bring their buildings up to future earthquake resilience standards.

The survey will involve a series of drill holes and cone penetration tests, providing information for three-dimensional mapping of the subsoil structure beneath the town centre. This information should lead to significant cost savings for building owners, who are also being encouraged to complete detailed seismic assessments of their buildings.

Ian Brown Associates Ltd staff taking core samples in the Whakatāne CBD.



CIVIL DEFENCE SIREN TEST

Eastern Bay of Plenty Civil Defence say last weekend's test of the area's alerting sirens and stingers proved very useful.

Eastern Bay of Plenty Emergency Management Coordinator Jim Tetlow said the sirens all went off as planned, and the simultaneous radio broadcasts meant that people knew what was going on.

The fixed Civil Defence Alert sirens in Matatā, Coastlands, Whakatāne, Ōhope, Ōhiwa, Waitohi, Ōpōtiki and Waihou Bay were tested, and the mobile alerting Stingers were also driven through parts of Ōhope, Whakatāne and Kawerau.

"Not only was this an opportunity to test our systems, it was a great chance to raise the profile of the sirens and remind people what they are there for – they are not an instruction to evacuate, but to find out more information on the radio or online. From the feedback we have received, people have really caught on to that message."



Mr Tetlow says a few wrinkles remain that will need to be ironed out and there was an issue with text alerts, which saw some people receive the messages later than others.

Pyne Street / O'Rourke Place Car Park Development

Before the development of the planned Pyne Street/O'Rourke Place car park can begin, the Whakatāne District Council is required to carry out tests to determine whether the soil in the area is contaminated. This reflects the former uses of the site for landfill, timber storage and bus depot purposes, which could have resulted in exposure to a range of contaminants.

for people who park their vehicles in this area, the tests involved, together with an assessment of the underlying ground conditions to assist pavement design, will be undertaken from 5.30pm on Monday, 13 October 2014.

The redevelopment work will involve some re-contouring and excavation of soil to allow services to be installed. A National Environmental Standards assessment and Resource Consent are therefore required. To avoid disruption

While the Council believes the likelihood of significant contamination is low, the testing team will be wearing contamination suits and face masks, as required by regulation for this activity.

When completed, the new car park will provide 93 parking spaces, with a further 12 angle parks on Pyne Street to replace the five existing parallel parks.



LET'S MAKE IT THE
PINKEST
DAY OF THE YEAR!

FRIDAY, 10 OCTOBER 2014